

Foster Care Review Board Utilization/Activity Report

For the Month of May 2011

Important Considerations: The number of reviews conducted each month may be impacted by the following: 1) not filling a review specialist vacancy in anticipation of budget cuts in 2011, 2) challenges created by the implementation of the child welfare reform, 3) holidays, 4) staff vacations, and 5) prior budget/staff cuts.

Current Month Statistics

	Reviews in Current Month	Goal for Current Month*	Percent of Monthly Goal Reviewed*	Reviews Year to Date	Goal for Year to Date*	Percent of YTD Review Goal Completed*
Children reviewed	383	350*	109%*	2,032	1,820	112%

*The goal is based on current staffing levels. Since the economic downturn began the FCRB has lost 1 supervisor position, 3 support staff positions, and 5 review specialist positions, thus the FCRB is unable to review all children. A plan is being developed to potentially conduct more reviews; however, due to continuing documentation issues, this likely will not be implemented until the second half of the year at the earliest.

Additional information on children reviewed this month:

IV-E Children Reviewed	214 (56%)	Children age birth-five	158 (41%)
Non IV-E Children Reviewed	169 (44%)	Children age six to 18	225 (59%)

Point in Time Statistics

Total children in out-of-home care on May 31, 2011 4,349 children
 Children who had been in out-of-home care 6 months or longer 2,855 children

Subtotals of those in care 6 months or longer→	Reviewed in the last 6 months	1,969	(69%)
	Reviewed, but not in last 6 months	446	(16%)
	Not reviewed	440	(15%)

Facts regarding the 440 children above:

Age breakdown: 39 children are age 0-5, 49 children are age 6-12, 352 children are age 13-18.

DHHS office/area:

1 is from Beatrice	12 are from Grand Island	12 are from North Platte
1 is from Blair	5 are from Hastings	214 are from Omaha
4 are from Broken Bow	15 are from Kearney	27 are from Papillion
0 are from Center, Nebraska	2 are from Lexington	1 are from Pender
13 are from Columbus	90 are from Lincoln	2 are from Pierce
9 are from Dakota City	10 are from McCook	5 are from York
8 are from Fremont	4 are from Nebraska City	
3 are from Gering	2 are from Norfolk	

IV-E Status: 6 are IV-E eligible, 434 are not eligible. The 6 IV-E Eligible children include: 3 from Lincoln, and 3 from Omaha.

Work with State Board Chair and Committees

The Director assured materials were prepared for the May 5th State Board meeting. The Director worked on SMART goals, and a calendar for the State Board.

Summary of Director's Meetings (additional information was/will be provided in Director's updates)

Work with Senators: The Director arranged for a Senator Appreciation Day ("Lobby Day") which occurred on May 25th. During May, the Executive Director met with Senator Campbell, Chair of Health and Human Services, Senator Howard, Senator Bloomfield, and Senator Krist.

Work with the Auditor. The Director, Administrative Coordinator, and Data Coordinator met with the State Auditor on May 18th regarding the child welfare audit.

Judicial Informational Meetings: The Director continues to serve on the Supreme Court's committee on GAL issues, which met to review proposed GAL standards.

DHHS and Lead Agency Meetings. The Executive Director met with DHHS Director Todd Reckling on May 31st. May meetings scheduled with the lead agency directors were canceled by the lead agency directors.

The Director continues to serve on the Partner's Council, a group put together by DHHS to collaborate on pertinent issues. The Director was named Chair of the Council's Rural Task Force.

Casey Foundation. The Director and the Data Coordinator met with a Casey representative regarding data as part of the Partner's Council Data Subcommittee meeting.

Management meeting. The Executive Director continued to meet with the individual members of the FCRB management team (coordinators and supervisors). A formal meeting of the team was also held on May 9th to continue coordination of the work of the agency. This meeting included a review of the open meetings act, the importance of verifying information reports, hiring staff, workloads, and vacation schedules.

Work to Ensure Children's Safety (additional information was/will be in Director's updates)

Court attended. Staff attended court on 40 cases involving 70 children during May. The Board's recommendations were introduced in 23 cases where the recommendation had not been previously introduced into the record.* In 31 cases issues identified by the board were addressed by the courts.

*There is a difference in judicial interpretation of whether the court can accept the Board's recommendation report on its own motion. Once a court has established how reviews are conducted and has established staff professional expertise (often through having our staff present in court), courts generally accept the recommendations report without an attorney introducing the report into the evidence.

Joint staffings with DHHS and/or lead agencies. Staff and/or supervisors staffed 43 individual children's cases involving serious issues with DHHS and/or Lead agencies in May.

Additional calls, emails, letters, meetings. During May the review specialists and/or their supervisor made 120 extra contacts to ensure that issues identified on a child's case were addressed. This consisted of additional calls, emails, letters, and/or meetings.

Facility or foster home visits. There were 2 foster home visits for 3 children in May.

Team meetings. 13 cases were brought to an 1184 team meeting in May. During May the Review Specialists attended 4 family group conference/team meetings to discuss case issues on behalf of children.

Staff video conference. Review staff participated in a video conference on May 12th to discuss issues impacting reviews and children's best interests.

Summary of Staff Collaborative Efforts (additional information was/will be in Director's updates)

Through the Eyes Meetings: In May, Supervisors and/or Review Specialists did not attend meetings of a Through the Eyes of a Child collaborative team.

CQI Team Meetings: Supervisors and the Program Coordinator continued to meet with partners/stake holders, and lead agencies statewide and serve on CQI teams look at issues, attending 6 such meetings in May. (A web-cam is being used in the Lincoln office to meet with the Central Service Area administration each month.)

Continued work with Lead Agency Quality Control Personnel. Procedures were further refined and utilized for reporting back to the lead agencies when there is a lack of documentation in the physical or computer records for children's cases. The process will be implemented during case reviews for July board meetings.

Special Requests Received

Three special requests were received on 10 children during May. Reasons for the requests for review or assistance included safety concerns and service delivery issues.

Cases Internally Flagged for Action

As part of the data entry process, seven cases involving eight children were flagged for special action during May, such as scheduling for review early. Issues included extreme abuse, neglect, or trauma experienced, abandonment, number of placements and times in care, and placement issues.

Statistics Requests

During May there were five requests for statistics other than those in the annual report, not including persons using the website to obtain statistics. Requests included a local board member who was speaking to a church group requesting general statistics, Senator Council asking if we had statistics regarding children served by CACs, Senator Howard asking for information regarding missing documentation and information regarding psychotropics prescribed and requested that this information be shared with all members of the Health and Human Services Committee, an advocacy group asking the number of guardianships completed in 2011, and a citizen wanting general information regarding the foster care system, including statistics.

Administration and Support

The Data Coordinator attended a meeting of the American Academy of Pediatrics Task Force on Child Abuse on May 10th. The Data Coordinator and Director attended a meeting of the Partner's Council Data Group on May 11th. The Data Coordinator also continued to provide statistics and lists from the tracking system for staff and non-staff usage.

The Administrative Coordinator, Data Coordinator, and Director met with the State Auditor regarding the child welfare audit on May 18th.

The Administrative Coordinator assured materials were ready for the May 5th State Board meeting. The Administrative Coordinator and Accountant worked to ensure staff's open enrollment (choices for insurance for the next insurance year) were entered onto the State's accounting/payroll system. The Administrative Coordinator and Accountant assured that all agency personnel were able to complete insurance enrollment before the open enrollment deadline.

The Administrative Coordinator and Administrative Staff assured materials were prepared and facilitated the agency senator appreciation day, including the luncheon.

The Administrative Coordinator and Administrative Staff continued to track children and their outcomes, process notifications and recommendations, and assure payroll and accounts payable were processed. The Administrative Coordinator continued to supervise case assignment, payroll, and accounting.

The Program Coordinator continued to supervise and assist the Review Specialist Supervisors.

The Program Coordinator continued to compile data on meetings and court attendance from review specialists' and supervisors' work documents. These statistics are used starting on page two of the monthly activity reports. The Program Coordinator also continued to provide some of the narratives for the activity report.

The Program Coordinator continued to enter the Lack of Documentation data for the monthly reports, and to compile the data to create the 11 different Lack of Documentation Reports that are distributed to DHHS and Lead Agency administration. Reports are shared with the State Board.

Case Assignment. 133 DHHS and Lead Agency staff were noticed that FCRB staff would be reviewing cases in 14 local area offices across the state in May. (The Omaha case assignment letter is sent to 23 different persons.) These letters include the date of the file review, the cases to be reviewed, and the Review Specialist's name and contact information. These letters are e-mailed only.

Notifications sent. Notifications for 41 board meetings were received from Review Specialists at least 12 days from the local board meeting date per policy and were sent out by the FCRB Processing staff on average within .46 days of receiving them.

Recommendations sent. Recommendations were sent to legal parties from 41 board meetings. All the recommendations were sent within 30 days from the local board meeting per statute, support staff sent recommendations out of the office by the FCRB Processing staff within .88 days of receiving recommendations. Staff faxed out 57 cases to meet court.

Trainings

No trainings for local board members or review specialists were provided or attended in May; however, the Program Coordinator finalized arrangements for the sites for the summer training programs.

Personnel

Three staff members had an anniversary date in May.